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HAWAII'S NAVY NEWS



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Bush signs defense bill, raises military pay

Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

In signing the fiscal 2002 Defense Appropriations Act, President George W. Bush said the United States owes military personnel the full measure of respect for their service and sacrifice.

Bush signed the legislation into law at a recent Pentagon ceremony. He said the act demonstrates the bipartisan support the military has.

"We can never pay our men and women in uniform on a scale that matches their sacrifices," Bush said. "But this bill reflects our respect for your selfless service."

"We owe you decent pay and

a decent quality of life," Bush told the packed auditorium. "We owe you the best leadership and training. We owe you the best equipment and weaponry. We owe our service men and women our best, because we owe you our freedom."

With this signing, Bush approved both the \$317 billion Defense Appropriations Act and the \$20 billion emergency supplemental Congress passed in response to the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

At the signing Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said that the terrorists aimed at the symbols of U.S. freedom, strength and prosperity.

"The enemy expected panic, confusion (and) despair fol-

lowed by hollow threats and feeble responses," Rumsfeld said. "They hoped we would retreat from the dangerous world that they helped create. Behind a barricade of icy mountains they felt secure. (The terrorists believed) that their landlocked fortress some 600 miles from the sea seemed far from the reach of United States forces. They were wrong."

"They underestimated the president of the United States, they underestimated the American people, they underestimated the men and women of the armed forces and they underestimated the men and women of our coalition forces."

Bush said that in the campaign against global terror, the

U.S. military must have every resource, tool, weapon and advantage necessary to accomplish the missions to come. He said the appropriations act is a "down payment" on this commitment.

Bush said the legislation funds an average pay increase of 6.9 percent for military personnel. It cuts the out-of-pocket housing expenses from 15 to 11 percent with elimination of this expense by fiscal 2005.

"This fully funds the healthcare of active duty members and their families and provides over \$3.9 billion for healthcare benefits for military retirees over 65 and their families," he said.

The act contains \$61 billion

for new weapons and \$50 billion in research and development, including \$8 billion for missile defense.

"My administration is committed to transforming our forces with innovative doctrine and strategy and weaponry," Bush said. "This will allow us to revolutionize the battlefield of the future and to keep the peace by defining war on our terms."

Bush thanked the members of Congress for their bipartisan support and said he expects the same atmosphere will prevail as the fiscal 2003 defense budget process starts. Bush will present his 2003 Budget Request to Congress on Feb. 4.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day should be 'a day on, not a day off'

BUPERS Public Affairs

Today until Jan. 21 has been designated as the period to commemorate the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday observance, which is celebrated in some form in more than 100 countries around the world.

This year's theme is "Remember! Celebrate! Act! A day on, not a day off."

So we pause to commemorate Dr. King's lifelong commitment to peace and justice, especially in light of recent events since Sept. 11 where our nation and our Navy have been challenged to come together and revitalize our commitment toward maintaining the peace and freedom that all of humanity cherishes.

In 1963, Dr. King wrote in "strength to love," "the ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

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Progress continues on 'The Mall'



JO2 Jim Williams photo

The open lanai area and the food court at The Mall are now beginning to take shape. The new food court area will offer patrons 8,000 square feet of seating and will include approximately a dozen food vendors, nine services and the package store. Construction on the \$52 million project began in March 2001. Opening of the new facility is scheduled for fall 2002.



EN3 Matthew J. Bodenner photo

Sailors from USS O'Kane spend time with the children from East Timor during a three-day humanitarian visit.

O'Kane Sailors host East Timorese children

JO3 Christina Glover
USS O'Kane Public Affairs

DILI, East Timor – USS O'Kane (DDG 77) Sailors hosted children here during the crew's three-day humanitarian port visit.

The children toured the mess decks first, where they were treated to barbecue chicken, hamburgers, hot dogs, French fries, cookies, fruit, salad and sodas.

O'Kane's mess specialists and food service attendants decorated the tables with white tablecloths and red napkins, and Yeoman 1st Class Patricia M. Perez and Personnelman 3rd Class

Jennifer A. Clifton showed the children how to put together hamburgers American style.

After lunch, Sailors led the children topside for a ship tour, where Damage Controlman Fireman Apprentice Chad A. Tolman showed the kids some of the ship's lifesaving gear and how to use some of the damage control equipment. They also saw the different weapon systems and a small arms static display.

A few children tried on the small craft attack team's flak gear. Information Specialist 1st Class William

R. Sohocki encouraged the kids in his group to growl and make a "war face" when they put on the bulletproof vests and helmets.

After the tour, the children returned to the mess decks for cake, which read, "Welcome Dili East Timor," and ice cream.

At the end of the afternoon, while the children headed back to shore, Sailors handed each of them a goody bag, containing an assortment of candy and cookies. As their boat departed, Sailors and kids alike applauded, cheered and waved goodbye.

A NATION AT WAR

Orion P-3 crew enjoys opportunity to do 'real-world' missions

Gordon Lubold
Navy Times, Staff Writer

Aboard an Orion P-3 above the Persian Gulf — Petty Officer 2nd Class Ron Williams grins from ear to ear when he talks about his work as a flight engineer aboard a P-3 Orion surveillance plane.

"I think this is the best enlisted job in the Navy," said Williams as he sat at a small table in the break area of the plane Friday. "The lifestyle is great and the view is awesome."

Their office is in the sky and the days can be long. But crewmembers from the "Skinny Dragons" of Patrol Squadron 4, based at Kaneohe Bay Marine Corps Base, Hawaii, are enjoying their deployment to the Middle East. They like flying around the world, gathering in-

telligence that may prove useful to commanders on the ground and at sea.

"Before [the war on terrorism], it was just exercises and you didn't really have bad guys," said Williams. "Now it's real-world stuff."

The crew of 11 flies several times a week, mostly at night, and sometimes for up to 12 hours at a time. Radar operators, pilots and flight engineers make do with canned spaghetti and noodle soup. And, despite the fact that this particular P-3 is one of the newest in the fleet — built in 1986 — the john doesn't work. The crew has to improvise. There is occasional down time and some crewmembers watch movies on a laptop computer when they're not loading sonar buoys for underwater detection, launching munitions or watching radar screens.

P-3 Sailors say the intense work calls for them to be highly focused and responsible. But even when they fly over enemy territory, which they sometimes do, they are rarely in danger. It's concern for their brethren on the ground or at sea that keeps them honed in, said one aviation systems warfare operator.

One of the best things about the job is the crew never has to live aboard ship, said another crewmember, a lieutenant junior grade who is one of three pilots who fly on any given sortie.

"I think a lot of the pilots who fly P-3s like being land-based," said Q-Dog, who gave his call sign instead of his real name. "It's a lot easier for me, on deployment, to go in and [contact] my family on the phone or ... the Internet."

Retention among P-3 crewmembers is one of the highest in Navy aviation, said

Lt. Cmdr. Steve Bethke, operations officer for the Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 1, based in Kami Seya, Japan. That's partly because crewmembers stay in hotels or barracks and get to see the world, even if it is from high in the sky.

Pilots like the work, too, even if it is repetitive.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Adam Stewart, who is the plane's fix-it guy, said it can get busy when electronics equipment fails and he has to make repairs on the fly. "Everything breaks," he noted. But Stewart, who launches the buoys when he's not fixing radar equipment and radios, said the job is all right.

"It gets monotonous. It's the same thing over and over," he said, but added, "I like being out here and doing my part."